Detail of the fresco by Muziano in the Audience Hall showing the lower section of the garden.

at the Fountain of Neptune but never went beyond the design stage. This latter cross-axis divides the hilly part from the flatter land before the gate. Originally there was a traditional garden bordering the labyrinths here, which was enclosed inside a garden wall. Wooden trellises covered with grapevines and square-shaped zones bordered by fruit trees and planted with aromatic herbs gave the garden a cross-shaped pattern. In the center stood an octagonal pavilion with three silver eagles and the gilded fleur-de-lis of the House of d'Este dominating the cornice; four fountains in the shape of flowers were set around it. Today the so-called Rotunda is what remains of this.

To see the actual architectonic garden, one had to leave this first section. The architectonic garden in fact starts out at the level of the fishponds, of which, according to the original plan, there were supposed to be four (the one on the side of the Organ Fountain was never built); the fishponds were bounded on one side by the slope on top of which was the Organ Fountain. On the opposite side there was to be a fountain symbolizing the sea, depicting Neptune atop a chariot drawn by seahorses, which was never built.

The Organ Fountain was begun in 1568 by a certain Luca Clerico and Claude Venard. The four travertine hermes with their arms crossed are by Pirrino de' Gagliardo. The center niche contains a copy of an antique statue of Diana of Ephesus preserved in the Farnese collection (now at the end of the garden) which was executed by a Flemish artist, Gillis van den Vliete. According to the Paris Manuscript there were to have been statues of Diana and Apollo at either side, but the façade was finished in the Baroque style only towards 1611 by